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EDITORIAL

THE LOOMING SHADOW OF THE WALLS Is a Cosmopolitan Europe still Possible?

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ABSTRACT: In a Europe of many lights and shadows, cosmopolitan sociology provides a valid theoretical framework to distinguish one from the other. If cosmopolitan sociology is an attempt to understand how individuals, social groups and institutions deal with the challenges of ever more transnational social processes, then the European issue can be fully inserted within such an approach. From this point of view, following the austerity policies and recent events involving Syrian refugees and the attack by Daesh activists at the heart of Europe, sociology has started to enquire whether a cosmopolitan Europe is still possible. Conversely, in the history of Europe and in its Constitutional Treaties, traces of cosmopolitanism are to be found almost everywhere. In this context, our study examines the crisis pervading Europe today and highlights the standing back to a certain extent of cosmopolitan sociology. At the same time, it stresses the hope that a change of direction will occur and the opportunity grasped of reflecting more deeply on the founding principles of cosmopolitan Europe.

KEYWORDS: Europe; Cosmopolitanism; Cosmopolitan sociology; Cosmopolitan Europe; Citizenship

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1. Introduction

One might ask, what *finalité* should direct the process of European integration and along which lines should the project be oriented? Is it legitimate to consider such goals directives for a political vision of the future of Europe? A basic answer relative to the present and destiny of Europe could be that if it hopes to resolve its crisis Europe needs both to link its project to a highly imaginative vision of the future and to explore new concepts to underpin integration policies that effectively enhance the genuine sense of its origins.

The difficulty however is choosing between the various visions of Europe. What is needed is a project based on principles and concepts of wide social consensus inspired by liberal and human values. Such values have sustained Europe ever since its inception as a political plan immediately following the catastrophe of the Second World War. Of the many 'philosophical ideas' of Europe in which European history abound, not all, obviously, are based on such significant values. At best, they are far too abstract for political action; in other cases, hopefully to remain in obscurity, the bellicose and aggressive elements of such ideas have been more a problem than a solution for Europe (as the attempts of Charlemagne, Charles V, Napoleon I and even Hitler, to build European Empires have testified). On the other hand, it is undeniable that certain ideas kindled by noble and humanitarian ideals have been a guiding light for the champions of Europe. The idea of 'perpetual peace' deriving from Abbé Saint Pierre and from Kant, which inspired both the project of a United Europe and Schuman's speech of 9 May 1950, immediately comes to mind. The same applies to the idea expressed in the Manifesto of Ventotene in 1944, drafted by Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi, in which totalitarian regimes are rebutted and a truly federal Europe advocated. Both ideas, often historically convergent, are far-sighted examples of the power of political thought as well as the capacity to mobilise populations.

Could 'cosmopolitanism', we ask, be included among such propulsive and positive forces? We believe so and that is ample justification for this *Special Issue* on *Partecipazione e Conflitto* dedicated to its potential convergence with the project of Europe. We consider that cosmopolitanism has the right and the vigour to be incorporated among the cardinal ideas on which the principle of unified Europe is founded and a point of reference for all those who believe in the respect for human dignity, of the environment within and outside the borders of Europe and not least, of cultural diversity. Not everyone would agree with us, for example those who consider cosmopolitanism a vague ideal, utopian, idealistic and élitarian. Above all, those who doubt cosmopolitanism's holding capacity, especially after the recent rejection of

immigrants at European borders and the policies of austerity put in place by European member States against other member States. We have ascertained above all that there is a gap between political scientists and sociologists, between scholars in general and political decision makers relative to the effective convergence between cosmopolitanism and Europe. While political scientists – with a few exceptions (Archibugi 1998; Rifkin 2004a) – retain an ambivalent attitude towards cosmopolitanism (considering it non-realistic and intangible in a world still centred – so they say – on the national state), for many sociologists on the contrary, cosmopolitanism (especially applied to Europe) is already a reality in an advanced state of progression. It would be tedious to mention all the studies dedicated to this issue however, the guidelines underpinning the truly convincing proposals are worthy of note. The most avid supporters of the cosmopolitan outlook in sociology have stressed their interest of extending its foundations to the analysis of the European reality in order to provide a relevant theoretical framework for a political project for Europe (Habermas 2003; Delanty 2005; Delanty and Rumford 2005; Rumford 2005, 2007; Beck and Grande 2007a/b). For these authors, European identity would be too ‘thin’ for comparison with the integrating strength of nations, but inclusive enough to act as a transcendent framework of national belonging.

Although there is fervent debate among social scientists on using the cosmopolitanism paradigm for Europe albeit contrasted, this is not the case for political decision makers, for whom *political Europe is decisively not a cosmopolitan project*. From this perspective, the EU hovers midway between cosmopolitanism and anti-cosmopolitanism. For example, the Treaty of Amsterdam welcomes States that wish to adhere to the EU but it obliges them to accept *acquis communautaire*; while it sanctions free movement within the EU for its citizens, at the same time, it erects barriers against non-European immigrants. A plausible reason for this could be the fact that cosmopolitanism brings to mind the idea of supranational identity, far too excessive for many European countries still strongly linked to their national peculiarities.

On the other hand, in EU official documents there are virtually no traces of the term ‘cosmopolitanism’, nor is the word ever mentioned in official European public discourses. At the same time however, elements of cosmopolitanism are undeniably present. Furthermore, the European Commission or the EU have incontrovertibly advocated the universal application of human rights and individual protection in the following institutions: the European Agency for Fundamental Rights, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of European Union, the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum and the Framework Decision on Combatting Expressions of Racism and Xenophobia. In the past, with the Copen-

hagen Declaration on European Identity in 1973 an attempt was made to create a European cosmopolitan attitude forged on a common identity. The declaration aimed to balance the preserving of national cultures through their 'legal, political and moral order[s]' and the shared values of 'representative democracy, rule of law and social justice'.

The building of Europe however, demands ideas not only intentions and we are convinced that fostering a cosmopolitan Europe would be a positive starting point. Had we been able to count on that in 2005 when talks on the Constitutional Treaty were ongoing, perhaps a Europe established on different principles compared to those of today would have been the outcome. In short, if the idea of a 'cosmopolitan Europe' is to be more than a mere belief in people's minds (mostly 'enlightened' intellectuals debating in university halls or in newspapers), we have to ensure that it is grounded in political acts, documents and official institutions as well as in people's behaviour. The only way of proceeding and sustaining the cause is, in our view, to guarantee that this idea becomes intrinsic to the rationale of official documents, especially in the Consitutional Treaties of Europe.

The purpose of this work is to delineate European cosmopolitanism, highlighting its *finalité*, and subsequently, to analyse the current crisis gripping Europe and, at the same time, to propose a cosmopolitan research agenda for the future. European cosmopolitanism will be defined not on the basis of a philosophical idea but within the specifics of European history and in the Constitutional Treaties and the Charter of European Fundamental Human Rights. As will be evident, the above charters albeit bereft of great idealism, do include a minimum of implicitly cosmopolitan grammar or what Alessandro Ferrara calls the 'semantics of hope' (2008). Such principles and respect for human dignity furthermore, can be traced in certain European historico-cultural features. They distinguish Europe from other social and political global spaces and enable us to sustain the thesis of Europe as a *potential* space for cosmopolitanism, a prospective reality rather than an inevitable historical horizon. It should be considered as a process that allows the observer to confront reality within a theoretical framework. Notwithstanding, issues such as the national debt in European countries and more recently events regarding the management of asylum seekers, do not prefigure the unfolding of cosmopolitan ideals either within or outside the European borders. What we are currently witnessing is the gap between the historical experiences of a cosmopolitan Europe, the intentions endorsed in the Charters, and the reality of Europe which is challenging its capacity, its destiny, its deepest feelings, its idealism and its history.

2. Europe as a *potential* space for cosmopolitanism

Then, what is this call for a cosmopolitan Europe built upon? The history, geography and demography of the continent is certainly oriented towards cosmopolitanism. In the 1980s, the French philosopher and sociologist, Edgar Morin argued with force that as Europe is a 'complex' entity, any analysis of it must be based on the 'Gordian knot' in which so many 'political, economic, social, cultural, religious and anti-religious histories are interwoven and interconnected in both conflicting and harmonious ways' (Morin 1987, 26). Europe is a continent that is haunted by both divisions and alliances with very passionate claims regarding identity, ethnicity and nationalities. The special correspondent Paolo Rumiz relates a conference made by Vaclav Havel during which the Czech leader declared that in Europe 'identities stick together and have no alternative between war and cohabitation, between self-destruction and being a unitary space in terms of spirit and culture. Europe is an archipelago in which diversities are interlinked to such an extent that the absence of just one of them would lead to its total collapse. It is a stomach able to digest peoples and cultures without ever making an informal mix' (Rumiz 2003, 65). Lastly, for the geographer Jacques Lévy (1997), the main characteristic of Europe is the coexistence of distinct social and cultural differences in one single relatively small area. Within Europe, exchanges between populations are relatively easy: it has high levels of population density, major cities that are only comparatively short distances from each other and a limited number of natural obstacles.

But that is not all. As we have already pointed out, Europe is a *potential* space for cosmopolitanism especially compared to other geographical areas, in particular the United States. If we adopt a perspective inspired by Tocqueville's analysis of democracy, we could apply a comparative method to confirm this. But why does Europe – in our view – represent a diverse historical space, compared to the USA, in terms of cosmopolitanism? As much as one might disagree with the observation of Martinelli (2007), relative to the fact that these two areas of the world can be considered as ramifications of Western modernity, it is undeniable that at least their roots are the same. The West has been the vital sap of both spaces, there is no question about that. Yet, elements of the European political space differ from those of the USA which depend on the history and political and cultural choice of each and which distinguish one from the other in cosmopolitan terms. At least three of these elements are relevant: a) relations with the enemy; b) the relation between capitalism and democracy and c) the building of Europe, including the drafting of Constitutional Treaties. For Ferrara (2008, cap. 8), these three elements constitute Europe as an 'exemplary force'.

The first element deals with the outcomes of the war and the representation of the enemy to defeat. For cultural and territorial reasons, if we exclude the Civil War, the USA has never been obliged to fight endogenous enemies. This has determined a 'border culture' which transmits even today a widespread sense of justified suppression of the enemy and an unlimited physical-geographical expandibility of the American way of life that induces the negation of the rights of Others and arbitrarily decides their fate. The war against Nazism, the dangers of Communism in the USSR and, nowadays, the Daesh, are pertinent examples. In contrast, the historical experiences of wars in Europe have taught above all the changing face as well as the ineliminability of the enemy. In other words, not an abstract enemy but the expression of diversity to be reckoned with always and in any case. Leaving out the imperialistic and colonialist wars which seem to deny a substantial difference in this respect between USA and Europe, not to mention the Holocaust, the internal conflict between European countries, albeit cruel and fratricide has always resulted in a definitive conclusion. The EU is itself an example, especially if one considers the impossibility of even imagining the establishing of a Franco-German axis which only a few years before the Second World War represented the greatest obstacle to building Europe. These considerations lead to an inevitable question. If we shift this difference between the EU and the USA to globalisation scale according to which borders tend to expand and blend into the globe on one hand (while the interaction between States becomes more numerous and complex due to global competition on the other), given the American stance that aims at expanding and overcoming its borders and the European position that transforms borders into boundaries to cross (*limen*), which of the two is closer to the cosmopolitan ideal?

The second element links European history to the particular relation it has with capitalism, democracy and welfare. This bond is quite different compared to that present in the USA. As is well known, except at its beginnings, the spreading of European democracy has never been based merely on free trade and a free market economy. At least since the end of the Second World War, in Europe the regulation of free trade imposed itself over the self-regulation of the marketplace. The outcome has been more a kind of capitalism under surveillance and kept 'under control' – linked to a system of redistribution of wealth called the Welfare State – rather than a capitalistic system that put free enterprise before solidarity or deregulation before the norming of utilitarianism. The 'neo-liberal' formula with which we now label this particular relation of solidarity subordinated to the marketplace, is rather a novelty nowadays for Europe (or perhaps a comeback after the wild capitalism typical of the late XIX and early XX centuries that Europe even promoted with the Freiburg School), accepted passively as an inevitable historical law of global human, economic development. In other words,

while in Europe the relation between democracy and capitalism has always been distinguished by a certain tension giving rise to open conflict at times, in America it has generally been translated in the coexistence, most probably fostered by a certain conception – glorified by Emerson’s expression of ‘self-reliance’ – of the individual. From the social doctrine of the Church to Socialism and Social Democracy, Europe has always considered capitalism more a price to pay for the establishing of democracy rather than an element, unequivocally taken for granted, of human development. A price that Europe accepted only insofar as it did not impair the human and social rights earned with difficulty through social conflict to resolve the issues of the Workers and those of women’s rights. As in the previous case, the question arises: why not grasp the unequivocal fact that the EU more so than the USA (and any other part of the world) is the ideal place to enjoy the spirit of cosmopolitanism?

The third element compares the two political orders and the respective modes of institutional government. The American politico-institutional system crystalised in a Constitution that sets out the goals has an institutional architecture that assigns functions and remits specific to the government bodies. The European system, on the contrary, is an ongoing project, subject to constant change and with unclear goals. While the American Constitution is an istitutive act of an already defined, political reality, the European Constitution is still in the making. Furthermore, as many political commentators rightly point out, the biggest difference is above all that marked by the presence or otherwise of an istitutive *demos*. This is not of little importance, if we consider that – before the European Constitution – a constituent process had never been conceived without a people, where now there are many. Given this state of affairs, at first sight the considerations infer that Europe has still a long way to go to equal the *modus operandi* that characterises all Constitutions worldwide. Yet, what we notice is rather that the limits of Europe’s Constitution are also its strength(s). If we look at the situation from a different perspective, we cannot help but notice that what the European Constitution is achieving albeit with difficulty, is the blueprinting of a global post-national political order. Seen in this light, it is the first attempt in the world to split what modernity has grouped together and what globalisation has put in crisis. It is an attempt to overcome the narrow borders of the Nation-state by generating a privileged space for cosmopolitanism and embedding it in the founding institutions of Europe. However, the European Constitution does not envisage explicitly nor wish for the elimination of the Nation-state. On the contrary, with its *in fieri* Constitution, Europe is striving to harmonise the diverse national specifics and political orders with a supra-national identity. Undoubtedly, this is no easy task. Before Europe, who succeeded in doing this, except by annexing countries? The EU, Beck and Grande (2007a, 121) have said, is ‘an

open project', whose borders have not yet been defined. This means welcoming anyone who wishes to become part of the great European family, sharing its values but above all, accepting participation in the *cosmopolitan project* of governance and voluntary inclusion that has no equal in the world.

In short, despite the ferocious internal conflicts that have lasted for centuries, not to mention fratricide wars, Europe seems to have achieved 'perpetual peace', created the Welfare State and is a place *par excellence* for social policy. Even without *demos*, Europe's *in fieri* project for constitutional unity represents a particular social space grounded in cosmopolitan experiences and elected to an institutional project of a cosmopolitan kind.

3. Tracing cosmopolitan insights in the fabric of EU Charters

At this stage we empirically analyse whether and to what extent cosmopolitan insights are evident in the fabric of the Constitutional Treaties and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. When work was ongoing on a Convention to underpin the European Constitution during the three-year period 2001-2004, the starting point was not only realistic but also cosmopolitan in intent. The Convention was based on two premises: the enhancement of common elements in current legislation in each member country of the Union and the need to draft details of rights and shared values. The outcome met expectations. The final document was imbued with a universal spirit founded on individual dignity, freedom, equal rights, solidarity and social justice. Its pillars were democracy and a legal order, in line with nearly all Western and European constitutional democracies, although at supra-national scale. After the French and Danish referendum, the final document, the EU Treaty of Lisbon in 2007, had lost much of its universal spirit. In the *Preamble*, for example, a significant sentence eloquent of cosmopolitanism indicating Europe as a 'privileged space for human hope' was no longer to be found. Despite this omission, many of the references to individual dignity and the fundamental rules and values of peaceful coexistence between European citizens are still in place. Undeniably, they 'trace' the presence of cosmopolitanism in the European Union's institutional documents.

After 2007, the two Lisbon Treaties were amended several times. The latest versions drafted in 2012 – defined technically as the *Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union* and the *Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union* – interest us most together with the *EU Charter of Fundamental Rights*. Our analysis does not concern *Protocols* (47), *Annexes* (2) and *Declarations* (65)

linked to the two Treaties nor the over 400 articles that make it seem more like a 'legal contract' rather than 'a constitution accesible to everyone'. We examine only relevant articles taken mainly from the *Preambles* of the two Treaties, from the *Principles* and from the *EU Charter of Fundamental Rights* to trace elements of cosmopolitanism in Europe by reading between the lines.

From the two Preambles, the elements linked to the political identity of Europe are highlighted. Citing the Preamble of the *Treaty on European Union*, we observe that the signatories *draw inspiration*

from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law.

The signatories also *confirm* the above rights together with those of "fundamental social rights", *desire* "to deepen the solidarity between their peoples". Furthermore, they *resolve* "to continue the process of creating an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe". The same applies to the Preamble to the *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*, of a much more economic and politico-institutional nature, in which we read that the signatory States *intend* "to confirm the solidarity which binds Europe and the overseas countries" and *resolve* "by thus pooling their resources to preserve and strengthen peace and liberty".

Unfortunately, we do not find such resounding ideals expressed in the great prose inspiring the collective imagination such as "we the people of the United States...", "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness", or "liberté, égalité, fraternité". At the same time, such declarations reveal an ideal dialogue which calls to mind all the great European principles and values based on the dignity of the person, democracy, freedom and solidarity. These cosmopolitan principles are set out more clearly in Art. 2 of the first of the two Treaties and are the effective core *finalité* of the EU project:

The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.

'Peace' is another value present in the two Preambles and in the *EU Charter of Fundamental Rights*. It declares specifically in Art. 3, para. 1: "The Union's aim is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples". Peace has been the core

aim underpinning the project of Europe ever since its conception in Rome in 1957 and is reiterated in that highly symbolic of the Nobel Peace Prize Award to the EU on 10th December 2012 “for [having] contributed to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe”. Also in Art. 3, other values are to be found such as: the safeguarding of the environment, sustainable development, full employment for all, combating social exclusion and discrimination, eliminating poverty, equal rights, solidarity between generations and the protection of consumers. In para. 5 of Art. 3, there is also a peremptory declaration whereby the EU proposes to act as a *global cosmopolitan player*. In this paragraph it is declared that

in its relations with the wider world, the Union shall uphold and promote its values and interests, [...] and contribute [amongst other things] to the protection of human rights.

At social scale, Europe resolves furthermore to promote the wellbeing of its citizens by taking ‘initiatives to ensure coordination of Member States’ social policies (Art. 5, para. 3 of the *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*). In this case, the EU intends to give consistency to and spread throughout the world its model of social solidarity, one of the characteristic cosmopolitan traits of European civilisation compared to the rest of the world.

However, the institutional European document containing the most relevant elements of innovation tracing cosmopolitan matters and principles, is certainly that of the Nice Charter (now the *EU Charter of Fundamental Rights*). Although the Nice Charter is merely an Annex to the most recent Treaties, it has become a document binding European institutions and member States. It is on a par with Treaties and their annexed Protocols and its force has not been diminished in anyway. It should be added that, since the start, the intention of the EU Treaties has never been that of creating a community of fundamental rights and in this respect, they have never contained dispositions dedicated explicitly to the basic prerogatives that qualify ‘man’ as such rather than just as a legal entity. In the Preamble, the Charter defines a basis of shared values in respect of “the diversity of the cultures and traditions of the peoples of Europe”. Subsequently, it lists and then defines one by one, six fundamental rights – dignity, freedoms, equality, solidarity, citizens’ rights and justice – as rights to safeguard. Together, they form essential principles which highlight the EU’s desire for a cosmopolitan space in which human dignity, not only that of EU citizens, is implicitly guaranteed.

It is unfortunate that the Charter has been excluded from the Treaties when – prior to Lisbon – it had been imagined as the pillar upon which to base the *constituenda* institutional integration of the European peoples. Was this perhaps already a sign of

the inverted tendency of anti-cosmopolitanism in Europe? Could it be considered an incipient (a)moral and institutional wedge by means of which the subsequent economic austerity policies and the walls erected by proto-nationalist States could have later prospered? From this perspective, the looming shadows are more than one and emerging trends are certainly disquieting.

4. The looming shadows

As highlighted previously, the promotion of peace in Europe – afflicted historically by bloody wars – is the real goal underlying the European project right from its design. However this is not really the case and the recent wars in Kosovo and the Ukraine are testament. These wars are still an open wound in the enduring European peace process albeit undeniably, much has already been done. The wars show above all the incapacity of Europe to speak with a single voice on a politico-military plane, and the EU's inadequacy in protecting its weakest peoples. In this respect, the phrase 'united we stand, divided we fall' has never been so true.

Furthermore, the effects of the lack of community solidarity are still evident. Significantly, Art. 67, para. 2, of the *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union* recognises solidarity between the European member States and the equal dignity of citizens of other countries as essential principles by which community policy should be inspired as far as political asylum, immigration and border controls are concerned. The recent examples of the Syrian refugees represent the negation of such praiseworthy principles. The lack of shared values, in contrast, signify a dramatic legislative and juridical vacuum. Luckily, countries hobble along although citizens do not. Not so long ago, while governments were erecting walls, real or on paper, bottom up mobilisations were taking place everywhere: Icelanders on Facebook offered flights and hospitality to the Syrians, Parisians gathered together in Place de la République, the Finnish leader welcomed refugees to his home, the Pope exhorted his parish priests to open the doors of their churches otherwise – he affirmed – they are just museums, cars in Vienna were moving in convoys to collect the refugees, German, Hungarian, Austrian, Czech volunteers and Bavarian policemen sang the European Anthem together and welcomed the first train of refugees arriving in Hauptbahnhof Central Station of Munich from Orbán's Hungary.

Is Europe suffering from a certain form of schizophrenia, one might ask? Do two separate Europes exist? Is the Europe of the institutions different from that of European civil society? We know that that is not the case. Everywhere racist movements are

spreading, rejecting foreigners in the name of national identity and interests to maintain. Debate is in ferment, public opinion is swayed between one or the other argument. Political parties in France, Italy, Great Britain, Hungary, Denmark, Finland, Greece and Poland – just to mention a few – are putting forward their political programmes based on rejecting immigration, the exit from the Euro, regaining national sovereignty, the violent criticism of the Eurocrats in Brussels (Enzensberger 2011).

In addition to the fact that these elements are casting shadows on the cosmopolitan project of Europe, it is not surprising that, with few exceptions, after the great season of the first decade of the century, sociologists have almost stopped speaking about cosmopolitan Europe. Nowadays, the semantics of interpreting Europe has also completely changed and the metaphor of Europe as a cosmopolitan mosaic seems no longer effective. This image, apparently belonging to the past, however still evokes the vision of a European political project with a cosmopolitan character whereby all national and cultural differences are acknowledged as essential for the structure of Europe as a whole. Therefore, Europeans ought to perceive their European neighbours as both similar and different and the diversity in national traditions seen not as a weakness for Europe, but as a strength. We are at a crossroads today, although Europe could risk losing its common identity, it can still change direction and acquire full awareness of its characteristic cosmopolitan potential and diversity. The question is: how can such a cosmopolitan conception be fostered given both the return of old and new rivalries on the European scene (North vs South, East vs West) and the perception of non-Europeans as a potential risk?

5. What sociology for a cosmopolitan Europe? A research agenda in times of crisis

To what extent is cosmopolitan sociology a viable way to capture the complexity of the transnational processes that European societies are dealing with? In our view, cosmopolitan sociologists need to delineated an agenda of future research in order to give some credence to the idea of Europe based on a cosmopolitan perspective.

If cosmopolitan sociology can be considered as an attempt to understand how individuals, social groups and institutions deal with the challenges of ever more transnational social processes, then the European issue can be fully inserted within such an approach. On the two distinct planes of socialisation of individuals and of their governance, Europe represents in miniature, a field of observation of how citizens and institutions are dealing with situations that require conceptual frameworks and analyses of

social reality that go beyond the traditional sociology of Nation-states. It would therefore be opportune to attempt to understand such transnational dynamics by examining the internal and external, political and symbolic dicotomies of borders uniting groups (from micro- to macro-scales) becoming nowadays, ever more open and ever more closed. In Gerard Delanty's view (2009, 52-53), "the cosmopolitanism imagination occurs when and wherever new relations between Self, Other and world develop in moments of openness".

A cosmopolitan perspective embraces such dynamics. Europe can be defined as cosmopolitan when it is observed that: a) European citizens interact with and relate to one another (despite their origins or their nationality within or outside Europe) in such a way that neither ego nor alter are assimilated to something resembling a totalising unity (*unicum*); b) national states act not only in defence of their cultural and ethnic borders, but enhance the individual as such, without neglecting explicit reference to culture and local/national senses of belonging and the concomitant social ties proper to the Nation-state; c) Europe acts as a political supranational entity with greater responsibilities (compared to individual nations), and is called on as a global player. Another priority of Europe, as is well known, is that of safeguarding part of the European spiritual heritage – human rights, pluralism, tolerance, laïcité, social welfare policies, the welfare of citizens, and so on.

These considerations are a claim for a contemporary renaissance of European cosmopolitan studies. Future research should therefore, address a cosmopolitan Europe from at least the following three dimensions: the observation and comprehension of how citizens live out simultaneously cosmopolitanism and 'banal' nationalism (e.g. considering themselves both national and supranational citizens) in conformity with a cosmopolitan logic that does not, however, exclude reference to the Nation-state but incorporates it in a complementary manner with that of belonging to Europe; the shift of focus onto Nation-states to grasp whether and to what extent they absolve their remit of guaranteeing freedom, justice, tolerance and 'education' in terms of cosmopolitan praxis, observing for example, whether and to what extent they continue to act in terms of defending (culturally, politically, and in other ways) their national borders; a higher scale of observation related to the extent and the ways in which Europe defends and promotes a cosmopolitan position through legislation and actions in the world.

There is a real shortfall of knowledge in the literature devoted to these topics, especially when cosmopolitanism is put to the test of the severe crisis that European countries are facing. During the last decade, and especially after the financial crisis in 2008, political parties and movements with a nationalistic agenda all gained ground.

Such parties are opposed to further European cooperation or expansion of the Union (Halman, Sieben and Van Zundert 2011). We need to ask the following questions: a) how are European societies dealing with the question of 'otherness', with increasing 'multiculturalism'?; b) how do European societies react to migration flows?; c) how do they cope with the effects of immigration?

The concept of globalisation "refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole" (Robertson 1992, 8). One of the widely accepted consequences of the globalised, mobile society is the development of individual outlooks, behaviors and feelings that transcend local and national boundaries. On the scale of Europe, can we affirm that this crisis is improving the image of Europe as a whole?

It is a well known fact that the cultural and historical diversity and the (recently) peaceful coexistence of the EU member countries is the most characteristic feature of Europe, which means a lot to European people. The painful past, made up of wars, genocides and persecutions, has been forgotten for the sake of peace and equal dignity of each country. Are we witnessing the emerging in Europe of new kinds of rivalries between states, geo-cultural configurations, namely between northern and central Europe and southern Europe on one hand and between the 'old' States of the European Community and the newcomers on the other?

As we already know, the inhabitants of Europe do not feel European or refer to themselves as European: they regard themselves foremost as Spanish, French, Greek, Swedish, Estonian, etc. Compared to national identities, the extent of a strong European identity is still to be confirmed. The Union is not yet in the hearts and minds of its inhabitants. "The European flag or hymn don't evoke the same patriotic feelings as they do in their American counterpart" (Halman, Sieben and Van Zundert 2012). However, it seems crucial to know how people living in European societies perform not only national but also transnational and cosmopolitan identities. What educational, or cultural baggage do young people need today if they are to become citizens of Europe and of a global society? (Cicchelli 2012). Furthermore, a public sphere in Europe in the making seems undoubtable. New modes of protest, claim-making and collective action (such as the young indignados in Spain, the Occupy protests, the social uprising in the Arab Spring, the unrest in Greece, and discontent in other European countries) are all indicative of the rising of a European transnational public sphere. This sphere "has become increasingly well defined as the space in which citizens of the European Union can utter their voice freely" (Eder 2006, 340). In this respect, how does crisis contribute to expanding the public sphere beyond the cultural container of nations?

From regional point of view, Chris Rumford (2002, 44) maintains that “rather than representing the local in a global/local continuum or being the beneficiaries of a postmodern form of European integration which advantages them over member states, the region is better thought of as the EU’s accommodation to globalization”. Should we move beyond the idea that Europe must be more integrated and more cohesive? Or should we still believe that strong solidarity between European countries and strong political integration are what we most need at this moment of European history?

6. Contribution to this *Special Issue*

Considering such an agenda, this *Special Issue* on *Cosmopolitanism and Europe* in *PArtecipazione e CONflitto* attempts to register the impact of cosmopolitan theory on contemporary Europe. The five articles, some empirical and other more theoretical, contribute to interpreting the processes of cosmopolitanism with the idea of Europe at its core.

The first two articles deal with case studies. The authors contribute to narrowing the gap concerning the lack of observational analysis on cosmopolitanism and Europe. In the first case study on the European Social Forum (Florence 2012), Laura Leonardi and Gemma Scalise explore empirically the cosmopolitan imagination as an effective process. In particular, the two scholars utilise Delanty’s notion of ‘civic cosmopolitanism’ as a conceptual tool for the interpretation of change in its principles and structure as related to Europeanisation and globalisation. They address a crucial aspect of the contemporary debate on European social citizenship in times of crisis. In the second case study, Dario Verderame concentrates on the ‘Festival of Europe’, a biennial event dedicated to European topics held in Florence. He analyses the organisation of the festival to verify whether the planning of this event has encouraged opportunities for stimulating cosmopolitan subjectivism addressed to Europe. On the whole, while Verderame’s article offers a glimpse of how Europe with its cultural policies devises top-down strategies that favour processes of Europeanisation, Leonardi and Scalise’s article inform us of the same dynamics but from a bottom-up perspective, that of civil society.

In their article, Massimo Pendenza and Livia García-Faroldi combine an empirical with a theoretical analysis relative to the possibility of European cosmopolitanism that does not reject national belonging. Using Eurobarometer data (71.3), they test the extent of dissemination among European citizens of a specific type of territorial belonging that Pendenza defines as ‘societal cosmopolitanism’. This concept expresses the

idea of a *cosmopolitanism grounded* in places and traditions, that combines attachment to local territory and openness towards others. Its main characteristic (which distinguishes 'societal cosmopolitanism' from other concepts of cosmopolitanism) lies in the idea that it is not nourished by the abstract principle according to which the status of cosmopolitanism can be attributed only if one is (or feels) a 'citizen of the world'. On the contrary, without totally distancing it from such an idea, the article highlights that if cosmopolitanism is to shrug off its liberalism, it needs social anchorage to root it more firmly to real life. The interesting result emerging from the testing of this assumption indicates that almost 25.0% of the European citizens interviewed possess such characteristics (with peaks of 30-40% in some countries).

The last two articles are theoretical and political in nature. Both express strong criticism of the lack of cosmopolitanism in Europe, albeit for different reasons. Robert Fine's article, rich in detail, accuses Europe of having abandoned its original project based on the 'Jewish question' during the Second World War, to found in line with Habermas, a cosmopolitan and post-national European space. Fine endorses much of Habermas' analysis, but at the same time, he criticises what he calls the 'cracks in the edifice' of Habermas' reconstruction as they allow back in a certain form of European chauvinism and make it possible to believe that the problem of antisemitism in Europe has been solved. David Inglis, on the other hand, believes that a real project of cosmopolitan Europe has never existed. His argument is that the EU was from the very beginning *ambivalently cosmopolitan*, for it was structured around a liberal-economic, market-based cosmopolitanism, as well as a rights-based conception of citizenship and democracy. When the latter is applied to transnational conditions a kind of legal-political cosmopolitanism is the outcome. Both forms of cosmopolitanism existed, according to Inglis, up until recently in a highly ambivalent relationship with each other. But as over time, he continues, and especially from the late 1970s, liberal-economic cosmopolitanism mutated into neo-liberal cosmopolitanism. As result, he concludes, the tensions between the two cosmopolitanisms now stand out very starkly, and have reached breaking point. The tension is for Inglis so marked because neo-liberal cosmopolitanism is a 'perverted' or 'fake' cosmopolitanism, which eschews the sorts of cross-border sympathies and care of Others which characterises cosmopolitan ethics and political practice in the most profound senses of the word.

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